

CD 2003--147

Friday, December 5, 2003
8 pm. Walter Hall

University of Toronto
Faculty of Music
Faculty Artist Series
Presents

James Parker Piano Recital

R.E. Edwards Chair in Piano Performance

PROGRAMME

Ludwig van Beethoven
1770-1827

Sonata for Piano Op. 31 No. 2 in D minor ("Tempest")
Largo; Allegro
Adagio
Allegretto

Sonata for Piano Op. 28 in D major ("Pastorale")
Allegro
Andante
Scherzo: Allegro assai
Rondo: Allegro ma non troppo

INTERMISSION

Modest P. Mussorgsky
1839-1881

Pictures from an Exhibition
Promenade
1. *Gnomus*
Promenade
2. *The Old Castle*
Promenade
3. *Tuilleries* (Children Quarrelling at Play)
4. *Bydlo*
Promenade
5. *Ballet of the Unhatched Chickens*
6. *Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle*
Promenade
7. *The Marketplace at Limoges*
8. *Catacombae* (Sepulcrum Romanum)
Con mortuis in lingua mortua
9. *Hut on Fowl's Legs* (Baba-Yaga)
10. *The Great Gate of Kiev*

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A PORTION OF THE TICKET REVENUES FROM THE FACULTY ARTIST SERIES WILL BE USED
TO FUND STUDENT AWARDS AT THE FACULTY OF MUSIC

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Programme Notes

Sonata Op. 31 No. 2 in D Minor "The Tempest"

Sonata Op. 28 in D Major "Pastorale"

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN

Born in Bonn, Germany, 1770

Died in Vienna, Austria, 1827

These two sonatas – quite different in character – were composed within one year of each other, in 1801 and 1802, respectively. This was a busy and productive time for Beethoven, who had moved to Vienna from Bonn a decade earlier. Things were going well for the young composer, who was still in his 20s: he had achieved success as a pianist and composer, publishers vied for his works, and in 1800 was granted an annual subsidy of 600 florins by Count Lichnowsky, a prominent musical connoisseur. (Six years later he insulted his patron, with the infamous remark: "There have been, and will be, thousands of princes. There is only one Beethoven!")

But with the dawning of the new century, Beethoven became increasingly dissatisfied with his early compositions. He dismissed a set of youthful variations as "nonsense"; and he asked a violinist friend, to whom he had sent one of his early string quartets, not to show the piece to anyone else. "I have greatly changed it," he explained, "having just learned how to write quartets properly."

The first years of the nineteenth century were also a tragic time in Beethoven's life: the time when it became increasingly apparent to him that his hearing was failing. The problem reached a crisis in the summer of 1802, when he penned his "Heiligenstadt

Testament" – a document addressed to his brothers (but never sent), in which he acknowledged that his encroaching deafness was probably incurable.

"Ah, how could I possibly admit an infirmity in the one sense which ought to be more perfect in me than others," he wrote, "a sense which I once possessed in the highest perfection, a perfection such as few in my profession enjoy or ever have enjoyed. I cannot do it, therefore forgive me when you see me draw back when I would have gladly mingled with you." The letter suggests that he contemplated suicide, but chose to live on for the sake of his art.

It is not difficult to read into the *Sonata Op. 31 No. 2* signs of Beethoven's personal and artistic struggles. Beethoven himself chose the subtitle "*The Tempest*" (after Shakespeare) for this work, which consists of three movements, all in some kind of sonata form. The first movement is highly dramatic, juxtaposing slow, mysterious arpeggios with intense allegro outbursts. The second movement strikes a contemplative pose, delicate and even ornate – but it is soon subverted by ominous rumblings in the bass. There is no development section here: the piece proceeds directly from the exposition to the recapitulation. The final movement returns to the *Sturm und Drang* of the opening, and is infused with a driving harmonic energy.

By contrast, the *Op. 28* sonata is predominantly serene and bucolic. The last Beethoven piano sonata to be composed in four movements, it was dubbed "*Pastorale*" by the publisher Cranz, no doubt because of

the prominent use of a drone bass in the first movement. The second movement, in ABA form, begins as a plodding march in the relative minor, only to turn into a little dance in the major. In the recapitulation, the original march is embellished and expanded. The third movement is a short, whimsical scherzo, also in ABA form. And the finale is a sunny rondo – which, like the opening movement, makes use of a drone bass. However, this rustic mood is interrupted by two energetic episodes; and a coda concludes the movement with a brilliant and showy flourish.

Pictures from an Exhibition

MODEST PETROVICH MUSSORGSKY

Born in Karevo, Russia, 1839

Died in St. Petersburg 1881

Modest Mussorgsky was born into a land-owning family, and his talent as a musician was encouraged by his mother, who took him to St. Petersburg at the age of 10 for piano lessons. However, the dissolution of his family's estate, when Mussorgsky was in his early 20s, obliged him to seek gainful employment, and for the rest of his short life he held several positions within the Russian civil service. (Like most of the "Mighty Five" Russian composers, he was never a professional musician.)

Mussorgsky always felt that his musical training was inadequate: he was often unable to finish compositions, and frequently appealed to his friend, Rimsky-Korsakov, for assistance with his scores. The only opera that Mussorgsky managed to complete in his lifetime was his *Boris Godunov*, which was staged in St. Petersburg in January 1874, to great popular success. However, the project had taken him an exhausting five years, and following its premiere he turned to smaller

forms. In the summer of 1874 he wrote a song-cycle, and also a suite of piano pieces entitled *Pictures from an Exhibition*.

The story behind this work is well known: 10 of its 16 movements are musical impressions of illustrations by Victor Hartman, a theatrical designer and friend to the composer, who had died one year earlier. The remaining six "promenade" movements are intended to portray, in various ways, the presence of the viewer moving from one set of pictures to the next. (Less well known is the fact that Mussorgsky conceived of himself as the viewer, making the theme a kind of musical self-portrait.)

A virtuosic work, *Pictures from an Exhibition* is an excellent example of 19th-century programmatic music, and Mussorgsky uses the full range of the piano's textures and colours to translate Hartman's pictures into sound. Some movements can be described as light and airy (such as "Limoges" and "Tuileries"), and others as dark and weighty ("The Old Castle," "Bydlo" and "Catacombs"), while still others defy simple categorization. "The Gnome" is grotesque, "Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks" is a delightful parody of dance music, and there's even a touch of klezmer in "Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle." The penultimate movement – the wonderfully bizarre "Hut on Fowl's Legs (Baba-Yaga)" – leads directly into "The Great Gate of Kiev," a grandiose finale that envelopes the promenade theme in rich, glorious chords.

This suite, now popular with pianists and audiences alike, was little known before Maurice Ravel orchestrated it in 1922. There is also an orchestral arrangement by Leopold Stokowski.

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Biography

In solo, chamber, and orchestral concerts across Europe, the United States and Canada, **JAMES PARKER** reveals technical prowess alongside subtle artistry. Celebrated by critics, he has performed with every major Canadian orchestra, and has given recitals across North America. Command performances for dignitaries and diplomats have taken him to the Canada House in London, the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C., and the Canadian Consulate in Chicago.

Mr. Parker achieved coast-to-coast prominence with his first-place win of the 1984 Eckhardt-Grammatte National Music Competition, and the Canadian recital tour that followed. He has continued to capture major prizes, including CBC Radio's 25th National Competition for Young Performers, the Juilliard Concerto Competition, and the Virginia P. Moore Award as the most promising young classical artist in Canada. In addition, he is the recipient of scholarships, awards and grants from The Canada Council, the Ontario Arts Council and The Juilliard School of Music.

A frequent guest on both radio and television, Mr. Parker has performed on Bravo!, the CanWest Global Network, MuchMusic and New York City's premier FM stereo classical music station, WNCN. In 1992, he was the subject of a documen-

tary on CBC television's acclaimed programmes "Adrienne Clarkson Presents" and "Sunday Arts Entertainment". He continues to be a mainstay of both local and national CBC Radio broadcasts.

As a founding member of the Gryphon Trio, Mr. Parker has toured across North America, Australia, and Europe. The Gryphon Trio celebrated their 10th anniversary earlier this year. They have been nominated for numerous Juno Awards, and a new CD with works they have commissioned (including compositions by Chan Ka Nin, Christos Hatzis and Gary Kulesha) will be released shortly.

Mr. Parker trained in his home town of Vancouver with the renowned pianist Lee Kum-Sing at the University of British Columbia. He also spent many summers at the Banff School of Fine Arts, studying piano with Marek Jablonsky, and chamber music with Lorand Fenyves. He earned master of music and doctor of musical arts degrees from The Juilliard School in New York, where he studied under the legendary pedagogue Adele Marcus.

In the fall of 2003, Mr. Parker joined the University of Toronto Faculty of Music, where he holds the *R.E. Edwards Chair in Piano Performance*.



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— The Washington Post

MOZART: Quartet in D minor, K421

BARTÓK: Quartet No. 2

TCHAIKOVSKY: Quartet No. 1 in D major, Op. 11

Monday, 2 February 2004

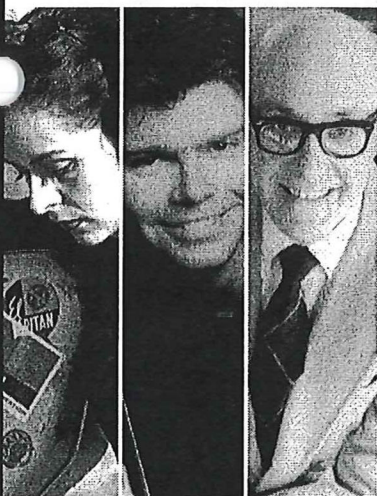
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Faculty Artist Series



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SHAUNA ROLSTON, CELLO

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Brahms: Sonata in E minor for Cello and Piano, Op. 38

Franck: Sonata in A for Violin and Piano

Mendelssohn: Piano Trio No. 1 in D minor, Op. 49

Friday, 27 February 2004

8 pm. Walter Hall

Edward Johnson Building, 80 Queen's Park

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FACULTY OF MUSIC *Piano* FUND

Pianos are integral to the continued success of all Faculty of Music programs. There is an urgent need to augment the infrastructure supporting piano performance with the addition of high quality pianos for use in concert venues, piano performance studios, and student practice studios. For this reason, the Faculty of Music has set a fundraising goal of \$250,000 in support of the Piano Fund.

A well-maintained quality piano can be found in every classroom, practice studio, faculty office, rehearsal room and concert venue in the Edward Johnson Building. Keyboard proficiency is an essential skill for music students in all disciplines, and one-fifth of undergraduate students are piano majors.



The piano performance program, now led by celebrated pianist James Parker, *R.E. Edwards Chair in Piano Performance*, is the training ground for generations of Canada's finest soloists and chamber music performers including William Aide and Jane Coop, to name but two. The Faculty of Music is in the process of conducting a search to make a faculty appointment in collaborative piano (voice) to begin in July 2004. It is expected that a broad pool of highly qualified artists from across Canada and abroad will apply for this position, given it is one of a small number of opportunities in the country. We anticipate another appointment in collaborative piano (instrumental) in the near future.

In order to equip our piano faculty with adequate teaching instruments, the Faculty must immediately purchase several high quality grand pianos for our piano performance studios. As well, we must keep up with the ongoing need for additional quality upright and grand pianos for our practice studios and classrooms.

Donations in support of the Faculty of Music Piano Fund will ensure the critical purchase of pianos for the Edward Johnson Building for the benefit of our programs and students. To make a donation, or for more information on naming opportunities and donor recognition for supporters of the Piano Fund, please contact Marilyn Brown at 416-946-3145.

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The Faculty of Music is committed to providing a stimulating environment in which its outstanding resources may support not only instruction of the highest quality but also the creation of new knowledge about all aspects of music. Since May 1, 1995, numerous academic priorities funded through the Campaign for the Faculty of Music have provided the means for our pursuit of this goal. We would like to thank all who have made significant contributions to our Campaign – generous donors, tireless volunteers and longtime supporters.

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